

**Preliminary Amendment of U.S. National Stage for International Application
PCT/EP2003/007457 filed July 10, 2003**

In the Claims:

Please cancel claims 1-7, without prejudice, and add new claims 8-22, in accordance with the following complete listing of all claims ever presented. This listing of claims replaces all prior versions, and listings, of the claims in the instant application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-7 (canceled)

Claim 8 (new): An apparatus for carrying out batch rectification in a rectifying column or for carrying out a chemical reaction and rectification in a batch reactor surmounted by a rectifying column, the rectifying column adapted for operation under total reflux, comprising at least one rectifying column section for material transfer; at least one column underflow product vessel for collecting and temporarily storing a liquid which flows downward through the rectifying column section; an overhead product vessel for collecting and temporarily storing an overhead product; wherein, an arrangement is provided for selectively guiding liquid, flowing down the rectifying column section, into the underflow product vessel or away from the underflow product vessel.

Claim 9 (new): The apparatus of claim 8, wherein, the column section comprises at least one packing section or at least one rectifying plate.

Claim 10 (new): The apparatus of claim 8, wherein, the underflow product vessel comprises a bottom vessel or a batch reactor; a collector is arranged between a lowermost column section and the bottom vessel or the batch reactor to collect liquid which flows down the column, the collector is connected at its outlet to an auxiliary vessel the outlet of the auxiliary vessel is connected to the bottom vessel or to the

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batch reactor via a valve which selectively controls the liquid flow to the bottom vessel or the batch reactor.

Claim 11 (new): The apparatus of claim 8, wherein the underflow product vessel comprises a bottom vessel or a batch reactor; a collector is arranged between a lowermost column section and the bottom vessel or the batch reactor to collect liquid which flows down the column, the collector is connected at its outlet to an auxiliary vessel via a first valve and to the bottom vessel or batch reactor via a second valve.

Claim 12 (new): The apparatus as claimed in claim 9, wherein a middle column collector is arranged to collect liquid which flows downward in a middle column section; a second valve assembly arranged to selectively guide the collected liquid into a second product vessel having an outlet which is connected to a lower column section, or to a bypass pipe arranged to bypass the liquid around the second product vessel.

Claim 13 (new): The apparatus as claimed in claim 8, wherein the overhead product vessel is connected to a head of the column via a feed pipe, a condenser, and a reflux pipe.

Claim 14 (new): A process for carrying out a rectification or a reaction with rectification in the apparatus of claim 8, wherein, the process is initially carried out under total reflux with a liquid flowing down a column section guided for temporary storage into product vessels and when the composition of liquid product in the product vessels achieves a required purity, the liquid flowing down the column section is guided away from the product vessels and at least a portion of the liquid product is removed from the product vessels.

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Claim 15 (new): The apparatus of claim 9, wherein, the underflow product vessel comprises a bottom vessel or a batch reactor; a collector is arranged between a lowermost column section and the bottom vessel or the batch reactor to collect liquid which flows down the column, the collector is connected at its outlet to an auxiliary vessel the outlet of the auxiliary vessel is connected to the bottom vessel or to the batch reactor via a valve which selectively controls the liquid flow to the bottom vessel or the batch reactor.

Claim 16 (new): The apparatus of claim 9, wherein the underflow product vessel comprises a bottom vessel or a batch reactor; a collector is arranged between a lowermost column section and the bottom vessel or the batch reactor to collect liquid which flows down the column, the collector is connected at its outlet to an auxiliary vessel via a first valve and to the bottom vessel or batch reactor via a second valve.

Claim 17 (new): The apparatus of claim 9, wherein a middle column collector is arranged to collect liquid which flows downward in a middle column section; a second valve assembly arranged to selectively guide the collected liquid into a second product vessel having an outlet which is connected to a lower column section, or to a bypass pipe arranged to bypass the liquid around the second product vessel.

Claim 18 (new): The apparatus of claim 9, wherein the overhead product vessel is connected to a head of the column via a feed pipe, a condenser, and a reflux pipe.

Claim 19 (new): The apparatus of claim 10, wherein a middle column collector is arranged to collect liquid which flows downward in a middle column section; a second valve assembly arranged to selectively guide the collected liquid into a second product vessel having an outlet which is connected to a lower column

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section, or to a bypass pipe arranged to bypass the liquid around the second product vessel.

Claim 20 (new): The apparatus of claim 11, wherein a middle column collector is arranged to collect liquid which flows downward in a middle column section; a second valve assembly arranged to selectively guide the collected liquid into a second product vessel having an outlet which is connected to a lower column section, or to a bypass pipe arranged to bypass the liquid around the second product vessel.

Claim 21 (new): The apparatus of claim 11, wherein the overhead product vessel is connected to a head of the column via a feed pipe, a condenser, and a reflux pipe.

Claim 22 (new): The apparatus of claim 12, wherein the overhead product vessel is connected to a head of the column via a feed pipe, a condenser, and a reflux pipe.